

Message Text

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TAGS : PINT, PO

SUBJECT : AZOREAN "SUMMIT MEETING"

REFERENCE: A PONTA DELGADA 047

B PONTA DELGADA 037

1. SUMMIT ON AZOREAN ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM HELD IN ANGRA FEB 28 THRU MAR 2. PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED CIVIL GOVERNORS OF THREE AZOREAN AUTONOMOUS DISTRICTS AND MADEIRA PLUS REPRESENTATIVES OF TOP DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES, AZOREAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, AND PONTA DELGADA PPD SECTION. MAPA, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY REFUSED ATTEND, (REF A) SENT "OBSERVERS" TO SUMMIT'S SINGLE PUBLIC SESSION.

2. IN SERIES CLOSED DOOR SESSIONS SUMMIT DISCUSSED WIDE RANGE OF PROBLEMS RELATING TO AZOREAN ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM. DISCUSSION CENTERED PRIMARLY ON 3 PROJECTS FOR REVISION OF BASIC STATUTES FOR ADMINISTRATION OF ADJACENT ISLANDS PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED BY PONTA DELGADA PPD, MAPA, AND " COMMITTEE OF 11 (REF B). ALSO CONSIDERED WERE CONCLUSIONS ON SAME SUBJECT REACHED AT FEB 23-24 MEETING OF ANGRA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES.

3. THOUGH EXACT SUBSTANCE OF SESSIONS UNKNOWN, PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT DISPUTES AROSE AT CONFERENCE BETWEEN PONTA DELGADA, UNCLASSIFIED

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DELEGATION COMPOSED ALMOST ENTIRELY OF "COMMITTEE OF 11" MEMBERS,

AND THOSE OF OTHER ISLANDS. PRINCIPAL POINT DISPUTE WAS COMMITTEE OF 11 PROPOSAL THAT PRESENT DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES BE REPLACED BY SINGLE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY IN WHICH ISLANDS REPRESENTED ON BASIS OF POPULATION,

ENSURING DOMINATIONS BY POPULOUS SAO MIGUEL. OTHER POINTS OF DISPUTE REPORTEDLY DEGREE OF LOCAL AUTONOMY VS. INTEGRATION INTO NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM; CONSTITUTIONAL VS. ORDINARY LAW FOUNDATION FOR REGIONAL AUTONOMY FINAL SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE RELEASED MAR 4. STRESSES

VALUE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS WHICH SUMMIT PROVIDE AND

OFFERS NUMBER OF RATHER VAGUE "CONCLUSIONS" "TO PROVOKE PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND SERVE AS BASE FOR FUTURE STUDIES".

4. IT NOT YET CLEAR WHAT RESULT OF SUMMIT WILL BE. PRESS SPECULATES THAT TRI-DISTRICT COMMITTEE WILL NOW BE FORMED TO PREPARE DRAFT STATUTE FOR ADMINISTRATION ADJACENT ISLANDS. DRAFT STATUTE WOULD THEN BE PRESENTED TO MINISTRY OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION FOR CONSIDERATION. PRESS QUOTES ONE UNIDENTIFIED PARTICIPANT AS SAYING THAT DELIBERATIONS OF SUMMIT SHOULD "ORIENT" ACTIVITIES OF AZOREAN DELEGATES TO NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

5. COMMENT: IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SUMMIT FAR FROM RUBBER STAMP FOR COMMITTEE OF 11 PROPOSAL THAT MAPA ORIGINALLY FEARED WOULD BE. FROM ALL ACCOUNTS DEBATE WAS SPIRITED, AND SESSIONS DOMINATED BY NO SINGLE DELEGATION. FACT THAT SUMMIT ABLE TO ARRIVE AT SET OF CONCLUSIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM, HOWEVER VAGUE, IS IMPRESSIVE IN LIGHT OF TRADITIONAL AZOREAN INTER-ISLAND RIVALRIES. IT APPEARS MAPA HAS MADE STRATEGIC ERROR IN BOYCOTTING SUMMIT. REFUSAL TO ATTEND ALREADY BEING USED BY LOCAL LEFT AS PROOF THAT MAPA AFRAID DEFEND POSITIONS IN PUBLIC DEBATE. MOREOVER, SHOULD TRI-DISTRICT COMMISSION IN FACT REFORMED FOR DRAFTING OF REVISED STATUTE, MAPA CERTAIN TO BE EXCLUDED. FOR THIS REASON, MAPA MAY WELL HAVE PUT ITSELF OUTSIDE MAINSTREAM OF EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY OF WHICH IT CLAIMS BE PRINCIPAL DEFENDER.

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